MONTAGUE HARBOUR MARINE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

March 2003

Approved by:

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Date: March 25/03

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Date:

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Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role
The **primary** role of Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park is to provide recreational opportunities associated with the marine and upland environments of the southern Gulf Islands. Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park, located on the westside of Galiano Island adjacent to Trincomali Channel, offers an excellent sheltered anchorage for power boaters, kayakers and sailors. Reached by ferry from Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay, this park also provides a variety of day use opportunities, group camping, boat ramp, amphitheatre and vehicle campground for residents and visitors to Galiano Island. The natural and cultural features of the park provide opportunities for study, viewing and appreciation.

Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park is the oldest marine park in British Columbia. This park receives high visitation and both the anchorage and campground are always full during the summer months. The growing popularity of the Gulf Islands and Montague Harbour as a major tourist destination has had a high impact on the park and its facilities. Other provincial parks found on Galiano Island are Dionisio Point at the far north end and Bellhouse near Sturdies Bay adjacent to Active Pass.

Secondary Role
The **secondary** role of Montague Harbour Marine Provincial Park is to protect a significant saltwater marsh, tombolo (Gray Peninsula) and adjacent foreshore habitat for a variety of birds such as bald eagles, gulls, great blue herons, pelagic cormorants and black oystercatchers. The intertidal area provides habitat for plumose anemones, cockles, mussels, clams, oysters and larger marine animals such as river otters, sea lions and elephant seals often frequent the harbour. Stands of coastal Douglas-fir, maple and large arbutus dominate the upland while an open grass area with fruit trees are remnants of an old orchard and farm site.

Tertiary Role
The tertiary role of the park is to protect cultural features. Important Coast Salish archaeological sites are found along the shoreline. The physiography of Montague Harbour, with its protected southwest-facing aspect and accessibility to many seafood resources, made it an ideal location for First Nations people. Three major occupations occurred at this site, dating back to around 3,000 years ago. Huge shell and household middens indicate large village populations over a long period of time.

Known Management Issues	Response
Existing vegetation impacted by high visitor use and invasive plant species (significant stressor). Recreation use exceeds carrying capacity during peak season.	Develop vegetation management plan to address issues such as invasive species (e.g. Scotch broom, ivy, gorse); some control programs are in place. Close off public access at specific locations utilizing fencing and signage to help prevent erosion and return natural levels of vegetation.
Park facilities need upgrading in campground, host site, interpretation area and group campsite.	Pursue funding for facility improvements.
Recreational boating (marine pollution from	Work with DFO and other agencies to monitor

anchorage and septic) has major impact on benthic community.	and regulate any pollution from boats anchored in Montague Harbour.
The existing management plan, approved in 1986, is outdated and does not provide adequate management direction.	The 1986 plan will be reviewed and updated to address management issues such as First Nation and local island consultation in any future facility development; protection of cultural and natural values; boundary/foreshore review; campground expansion; relationship to other protected areas on Galiano Island and adjacent Gulf Islands National Park. A new management plan should be prepared within 5 years.
Protection of cultural resources: • historical farm apple orchard requires pruning; • high use levels impacting middens.	Pursue funding for pruning of apple trees and/or seek island volunteers to maintain orchard. Provide interpretative signage and fencing to protect middens. Continued consultation with First Nations regarding ongoing management of cultural resources and proposed foreshore addition.

Zoning

This park has 3 zones: Natural Environment Zone which contains much of the undeveloped forested upland (approximately 87% of the park); Intensive Recreation Zone that includes the campground, group/marine camping and day use areas, wharf and designated anchorages (approximately 9% of the park); and Special Features Zones that contains significant cultural resources and natural values such as Gray Peninsula and the salty marshes (approximately 4% of the park).

	Conservation	
Representation - ecosection	☒	Southern Gulf Islands Ecosection. This ecosection is under-represented with only 5.62% protected in protected area system. Montague Harbour contributes 2.36% of the overall representation of the ecosection. 30 hectares in the Strait of Georgia (Marine) Ecosection; 0.94% of this ecosection protected and Montague contributes 0.40% of this representation.
biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	CDFmm biogeoclimatic variant and only 2.43% of CDFmm is protected; Montague Harbour Park contributes 0.98% of the overall representation of the CDFmm.
Special Feature	☒	Salt water marsh and tombolo connecting Gray Peninsula, eel grass and other high benthic values in marine foreshore.
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	Habitat for western screech owl.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Wetlands; marine disasters; high levels of use and impact of recreationalists on marine and natural values.
	Recreation	
Representation backcountry	☐	
destination	☒	Extremely popular Gulf Islands campground and anchorage.
travel corridor	☒	Principal anchorage on the Gulf Islands marine route and increased demand as result of new national park reserve.
local recreation	☒	Popular picnicking, hiking, beach, boat launch, anchorage and camping area for islanders and their visitors.
Special Opportunities	☐	
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	On-site interpretation program, floating nature house.
	Cultural Heritage	
Representation	☒	Important Coast Salish site (3,000 year old village, middens and other culturally significant features).

Special Feature	☒	Shell middens; old fruit orchard is remnant of typical Gulf Island farm.

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Address access issue to Dionisio Point and discuss additional camping area on Galiano Island.
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	
Partnerships	☒	Cooperation with Islands Trust – stewardship with local islanders/interest groups.
Vulnerability	☒	Overcrowding, marine pollution, damage to seabed from anchoring, fire, vandalism; invasive species; increased demand as result of pending national park reserve.
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	PMHL program and establishment of Gulf Islands National Park; within National Marine Conservation Area study area, Marine Protected Areas Strategy.

Area: 97 hectares (67 ha upland; 30 ha foreshore)

Date of establishment: March 6, 1959

Zoning Map - Montague Harbour Marine Park

Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Produced in Mar 2003 for Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection by MSRM, Decision Support Services

Intensive Recreation
Natural Environment
Special Feature
Protected Area Boundary

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This is a visual representation only and should not be used for legal purposes.